

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1 and 11 are amended and claims 21 and 22 are added. No new matter is added.

I. Formal Matters

The specification is amended to substitute the serial number and patent number of co-pending applications and to remedy an informality in paragraph [0039]. No new matter is added.

II. Pending Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2, 4, 6-12, 14 and 16-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Herz (U.S. Patent No. 6,029,195); rejects claims 3 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Herz in view of admitted prior art (APA); and rejects claims 5 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Herz in view of Johnson (U.S. Patent No. 5,878,384). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 1 and 11 are amended to specify that the user information need includes a value "estimated using a spreading activation algorithm." New dependent claims 21-22 further define the spreading algorithm feature. These amendments are supported, for example, by paragraphs [0038] - [0040] and Figs. 2, 3, and 7.

None of the applied references disclose or suggest that the user information need includes a value that reflects a probability a user will browse through a content portion in at least one significant user path estimated using a spreading activation algorithm, as recited in independent claim 1, and similarly in independent claim 11.

Herz discloses at col. 7, lines 1-18 that each user's interest in various target objects are estimated by comparing target profiles of the target objects and the search profiles of the user. Based on this information, Herz's system generates a user-customized rank ordered listing for the user's review. At best, col. 57, lines 10-37 estimates a probability that a user will access

target object. This disclosure pertains to determining similarity between a user's search profile and target profiles and generating a collection of target profiles (i.e., "clusters", see col. 4, lines 64-65) that may be of interest to the user.

However, nowhere does Herz disclose a probability a user will browse through a content portion in at least one significant user path using an estimated spreading activation. In fact, Herz is silent as to the above-noted feature, and thus, does not disclose or suggest the above-noted feature of independent claims 1 and 11.

Neither Pitkow nor Johnson compensate for the deficiencies of Herz. Therefore, independent claims 1 and 11 define patentable subject matter. Claims 2-10 and 12-20 depend on the respective independent claims, and therefore also define patentable subject matter.

New claims 21-22 further define the spreading activation algorithm and are allowable for their dependence on allowable base claims 1 and 11 and for the additional features recited therein.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-22 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Amendment Transmittal

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